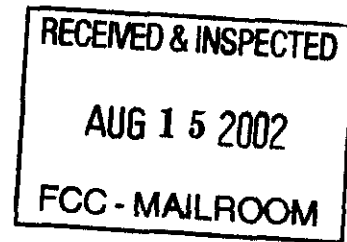


DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

August 5, 2002

Marlene H. Dortch
Office of the Secretary
Federal Communications Commission (FCC)
445 12th Street SW, TW-A325
Washington, DC 20554



Re: Ultratec's Petition on CapTel - Docket 98-67

As a person who has experienced CapTel, I am sending these comments to support Ultratec's petition to the FCC on the offering of CapTel service. I have had the opportunity to experience CapTel calls, and can tell you first hand the impact it has made on my ability to use the telephone.

A friend from Virginia first told me about the Federal Relay sponsoring a test of the CapTel phone. Soon after that I received an invitation and application from Maryland Relay to volunteer for the CapTel trial, with instructions to register for the trial. I am unable to understand on a normal phone, even with an amplified handset, and use a TTY exclusively. I made every effort to be on the list of volunteers for the CapTel trial. I am happy to report, that I was accepted as one of the trial participants by Sprint Federal Relay. Since June 15, 2002 I am now using the CapTel phone, as the service is available to me.

Personal background:

I have a profound to sever hearing loss and am able to use one hearing aid, to understand speech I must be able to lip-read. I have a phone with amplified handset, however am able to understand only my mother on the phone. All phone calls are made using a TTY or Relay.

TTY use:

Many business do not like TTY calls, because they take up to much time. It is not unusual that business just hung up or say "we do not have time for that call". Additionally when business have recorded messages with prompts, Relay has to redial each time the message is complete to press the desired prompts. TTY calls are usually not user friendly, with messages stated very brief and often incomplete. Friends do call only if necessary, because it takes to much time and effort to use the Relay or a TTY. Many times I had to ask co-workers or friends to make a phone call for me, because I was unable to communicate with certain business outfits.

CapTel experience:

Now here is CapTel, which is really making calls much smoother for the hearing impaired and or deaf person. Not all deaf person can use CapTel, i.e. if not able to speak. My experience with CapTel is, that it is much easier to reach and communicate. It is quicker, smoother and allows communication without barriers to anybody. Business are now happy to provide information and are friendly. I am feeling good about not being treated like some kind of weirdo. I am feeling happier and more full filled being able to use a phone without asking favors from others. The only thing that keeps me from using

No. of Copies rec'd 0
List ABCDE

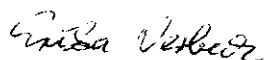
the CapTel is the time restraints to use the phone. The CapTel is available for use only from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday to Friday. I am a working person and usually arrive home from work around 5:00 p.m. or later. So I still have to use the TTY to cover the rest of the time.

The differences:

My friends are thrilled to hear my voice, instead of the Relay person, which sometimes is of the other gender. They are happy to chat and talk longer with me and really tell stories, before with TTY I was told only the absolute necessities. Now I feel like I am accepted as a normal person and the world appears to open up to me. Before I never knew if I was a burden or just not being welcome to call. As time paves the way to improvements I definitely feel CapTel is a phone we must have available for the hearing impaired and deaf community. I sincerely hope that this phone is being implemented and services for placing calls are made available.

In closing, CapTel should be recognized by the FCC as a reimbursable TRS service.

Sincerely,



Erika Verbeck
18705 Pier Point Place
Montgomery Village, Md 20886
everbeck@hrsa.gov